

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 08931 251504Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 TRSE-00 MC-02 IGA-02 AID-05 ACDA-07 NSC-05
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R 251458Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8538
INFO USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY LISBON
DA WASHDC
USNMR SHAPE
CINC EUR VAIHINGEN
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 08931

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MPOL, NATO, PO, GW
SUBJECT: TANKS FOR PORTUGAL

REFS: (A) USNATO 03529 DTG 180651Z MAY 77 (NOTAL);
(B) STATE 109485 DTG 141702Z MAY 77 (NOTAL);
(C) BONN 05833 DTG 011715Z APR 77 (NOTAL)

1. IN DISCUSSIONS HERE, THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF
DEFENSE (FMOD) CONFIRMED INFORMATION
CONTAINED IN REFTEL A TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FRG IS NOW
WILLING TO PROVIDE 18 M48A2 TANKS FOR PORTUGUESE FORCE
MODERNIZATION RATHER THAN 17. OUR SOURCES WERE SOMEWHAT
MORE CAUTIOUS THAN GENERAL BRANDT IN PROMISING TO PAY
FOR THE UPGRADING OF THESE TANKS TO AN M48A5 LEVEL.
HOWEVER, ALL DEFENSE MINISTRY PLANNING IS BASED ON THE
ASSUMPTION THAT THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT WILL DO SO PRO-
VIDED PORTUGAL CONTINUES TO WISH TO SPEND THE LIMITED
GERMAN DEFENSE AID ON THIS PROJECT.

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2. AT THIS MEETING, EMBOFF DELIVERED COST DATA
PROVIDED BY DARCOM. THE FMOD IS CURRENTLY EXAMINING
THESE FIGURES IN ORDER TO MAKE A FORMAL REQUEST FOR AN
LOA. EMBOFF EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF AN EARLY
DECISION CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF ANCILLARY EQUIP-
MENT.

3. PARA 4 OF REFTTEL B DESCRIBED THE U.S. POSITION CONCERNING DIVERSION OF M48A5 TANKS FROM ANNISTON. WHILE THERE ARE GERMAN SENSITIVITIES CONCERNING THE U.S. LEADERSHIP ROLE, EMBASSY BONN DOES NOT REPEAT NOT CONSIDER THAT U.S. WILLINGNESS TO DIVERT THESE TANKS RISKS GIVING THE FRG THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE PREEMPTING THEIR PROPOSED CONTRIBUTIONS TO PORTUGAL'S NATO BRIGADE. INDEED, AS SUGGESTED IN REFTTEL C, THE FRG CONSIDERS THAT DIVERSION FROM ANNISTON OFFERS THE ONLY PRACTICAL MEANS OF PROVIDING PORTUGAL WITH THESE TANKS IN A SUFFICIENTLY TIMELY MANNER. UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE, THE EMBASSY PROPOSES TO INFORM THE FMOD IN UNEQUIVOCABLE TERMS THAT THE USG IS PREPARED TO DIVERT 18 REPEAT 18 M48A5 TANKS FROM ANNISTON IF THE FRG SO DESIRES.
STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

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